Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Process for the production of a conjugate from a polynucleotide and a ~~polysaccharide~~ hydroxyethyl starch comprising the steps:

   a) reacting an aldonic acid of said ~~polysaccharide~~ hydroxyethyl starch with a carbonate ~~derivative~~ of ~~an alcohol~~ N-hydroxy-succinimide in a dry aprotic polar solvent to form an aldonic acid ester, and

   b) reacting said aldonic acid ester with the polynucleotide, wherein the polynucleotide comprises an amino group.

2. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the solvent is selected from the group consisting of dimethylsulphoxide, dimethylformamide and dimethylacetamide.

3. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the aldonic acid ester is purified and is then used in step b).

4. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the reaction charge from step a) is used with the aldonic acid ester directly in step b).

5. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that step b) is carried out at a pH range of 7 to 9.

6. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 5, characterised in that step b) is carried out at a pH of approximately 8.4.

7. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the molar ratio of aldonic acid to the carbonate ~~derivative of an alcohol~~ N-hydroxy-succinimide is approximately 0.9 to 1.1.

8.-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1~~-10~~, characterised in that the hydroxyethyl starch exhibits a weight-averaged mean molecular weight of approximately 3,000 to 100,000 Dalton.

12. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1~~-10~~, characterised in that the hydroxyethyl starch exhibits a number average of the mean molecular weight of approximately 2,000 to 50,000 Dalton.

13. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1 ~~one of claims 10 to 12~~, characterised in that the hydroxyethyl starch exhibits a ratio of weight-averaged molecular weight to number average of the mean molecular weight of approximately 1.05 to 1.20.

14. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1~~-10~~, characterised in that the hydroxyethyl starch exhibits a molar substitution of 0.1 to 0.8.

15. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1~~-10~~, characterised in that the hydroxyethyl starch exhibits a substitution sample expressed as the C2/C6 ratio of approximately 2 to 12.

16. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the polynucleotide is an aptamer or a Spiegelmer.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the polynucleotide exhibits a molecular weight of 300 to 50,000 Da.

19. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the amino group is a primary or secondary amino group.

20. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the amino group is bound to a terminal phosphate of the polynucleotide.

21. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 20, characterised in that the amino group is bound to the phosphate group via a linker.

22. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that the amino group is a 5-aminohexyl group.

23. (Cancelled)